THE INTERNATIONAL 190SL Group USA

190 SL GROUP

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Meet Me in St. Louis!
June 22-26, 2005

2005 190SL
Convention & *Concours*

Volume 23 – Issue 3 MAY/JUNE 2005

VISIT WITH A GREAT *Mercedes Artist*

by Nils Jensen

In the January 2005 President's Letter, Tom Hamilton wrote about the Danish Mercedes Club unveiling their beautiful 50th anniversary SL poster. His article included a photo of the poster (see p. 3520). Last month I had the opportunity to visit with the great artist, Michael Julin, who created this art print. During my visit to Denmark in February, much to my surprise, I found that the artist is a next-door neighbor to my home in the small town of Aabenraa, located 23 km from the Germany border.

I was fortunate to spend an hour discussing his artwork in his studio, where he is currently working on a Ferrari race car, although he admitted that his favorite work was on Mercedes cars. Michael has collected a very large library of designs and details of almost all Mercedes models and can draw these models to their exact proportions.

He has frequently been commissioned to render art for a number of owners' cars, with the details and colors to match his or her automobile exactly. From the pictures included here, you can see his yet-to-be-completed work for a 190SL owner. His work is absolutely spectacular, and if you wish to have your model recreated on paper, all you have to do is to send him some photos.

Michael Julin's address is: Jorgensgaard 24, DK 6200, Aabenraa, Denmark (he does not have e-mail). If you have not already done so, I can highly recommend you acquire one of these art prints from the Club Store at the Website www.190SLgroup.com.

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Policy Statement

The International 190SL Group, Inc., is a not-for-profit corporation, founded in 1983 for the owner-enthusiast who would like to learn more about the car and share his or her knowledge of and experiences with the car with others. This newsletter is published to help meet that goal.

Want ads to buy or sell items related to the 190SL are free to non-commercial members.

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As President Tom writes in this issue's Taking Note, our energetic 190 SL Group continues to prosper, both financially as well as with many new projects initiated by the membership. This is due in large part to the outstanding leadership Tom provides, as well as enthusiastic support from your Board of Directors. Your Board meets quarterly via telephone conference call and annually at our conventions face to face. All of our members are encouraged to participate in any of these meetings; simply request through Tom a place on the agenda. New ideas and projects keep us the club that we are.

Several new projects deserve mention. Jim Villers will be adding, the later part of this summer, a series of new technical DVDs to our Club Store for sale. A club insignia stainless-steel license plate is also in production and will be a much-anticipated item for our cars. We congratulation Jim, Bill Ainsworth, and Bill Streep for their continued hard work with the Website and Club Store. The Website has not only provided a venue for exchange of technical information, but also a home for our Club Store. This allows us to sell our merchandise to a worldwide audience. And it is the cash flow from the Club Store that funds new projects and provides us the opportunity to do a quality newletter.

And behind the scenes we have a couple of other Board members that deserve recognition. Bill Johnson has been our beancounter for several years and has worked tirelessly at that volunteer position. Shirley and Don Freese manage our membership office and deal with our club administration on a day-to-day basis. And finally, Ed Bertrand maintains the 190SL registry and data base, plus tracks important production change information for all of us.

On behalf of our club, thank you for all that you do. See you in St. Louis.

Your Editor

May 2005 President's Letter

I find that this job just gets easier. When various and different club members continue to "step up" and offer to bring something new to our membership, it's difficult not to sit back and watch them do their thing.

Two new club initiatives are under way as you read this letter. Jim Villers and Bill Ainsworth have undertaken the assembly of a club poster to showcase our members and their cars. The poster is currently envisioned as a collage. If you are interested, submit your photos to Jim Villers on the Website, 190slgroup.com.

The second initiative is being spearheaded by Bruce Adams. The club book, *Mercedes-Benz 190SL 1955-1963: Restoration and Ownership* is selling briskly. At the current rate of sales, the first printing will be sold out in the next 18 months. Bruce has been collecting additional information and new articles with the idea of publishing a second edition. The second edition would be based upon the current book, allowing the authors to update and correct their current chapters, as well as add new chapters.

Ron and Lucy Rapp have offered to sponsor a new trophy, to be awarded at all future national conventions. Ron has always wanted to recognize cars restored by their owners; therefore, this trophy will be call the Founders Award, to honor Ron and Lucy's efforts in restoring their 190SL, as well as memorialize their contribution as founders of the club in 1982. Way to go, Ron and Lucy.

Your club will also have a presence at MBCA's Star Tech, April 22 to 24, in Raleigh, North Carolina. Four of our members, Will Samples, Bob Platz, Robby Ackerman, and Bruce Adams, will be making presentations in the tech sessions. Jim Villers and I, with help from the others, will represent the club and sell for the club store, and I will represent the Classic Adelaide Rally for November 2005 in Adelaide, South Australia. Your club has arranged to videotape the tech sessions put on by our members so that we can make them available to our members.

It is also interesting to know that MBCA is publishing a special 50th anniversary book, with Bruce Adams appointed as its editor. You will want to check out the notice of this new publication, published in the May/June issue of *The Star* magazine, where the book will be offered for sale. Way to go, Bruce.

As the clock winds down on the St. Louis convention, I would like to update you with some of the recent additions to the event. First, I need to give you the address of the museum: Kemp Auto Museum, 16955 Chesterfield Airport Road, Chesterfield, MO 63005, phone 636-537-1718. For those of you that will need trailer parking, it is available at the Doubletree Hotel, as well as on the museum grounds. The Museum scheduled the Grand Opening Gala for April 1. It has turned out to be better than anyone expected, which is not surprising, given the vision and talent of its founder, Fred Kemp. I hope that many of you can find to time to come to this very special opportunity to experience our 190SLs at their best and to see the 65 Mercedes-Benz cars, the jewel of the Museum, that Fred collected over his lifetime.

The Tour of Discovery is scheduled for Thursday and will take us to the Lewis and Clark Visitors Center and Museum, the town of Elsah, and Pere Marquette State Park, as well as on two historic ferries across the Illinois and Mississippi Rivers. This is a special tour that you will want to be a part of.

Friday is a very special day, sponsored by Mercedes-Benz USA. Mercedes has arranged for Günther Bäurerle to be our featured speaker. Günther will tell us about his experiences from 1954 to 1962 with the 190SL and other Mercedes of the time, as he lived it. This period is a pivotal time in Mercedes history as it re-established the Mercedes-Benz brand in the US and around the world. There will also be a tour available for those who would like to experience many of the delights of St. Louis, while the car nuts OD on the history of our car.

Saturday, Plaza Motors, the local Mercedes dealer, is sponsoring the *Concours* on the Plaza at the Kemp Auto Museum. The *Concours* will be welcoming members of the Gateway chapter of MBCA, as well as employees and customers of Plaza Motors. The museum will be all day, and for those of you that think that six hours of cars is too much and need a break for "cars," we will have shuttles available to take you to the large plaza across the street.

I have been working with one of our members, Harold Schmidt of Columbia, MO, to put together the After the Ball Tour. Harold has arranged for this tour to leave the Doubletree at 10:30 a.m. on Sunday, after the members breakfast. The After the Ball Tour will begin by following the Lewis and Clark expedition route up the Missouri River. We will be driving in a convoy, with the first stop at the Daniel Boone Home and Village (77 miles) before going on the Stone Hill Winery in Herman, MO, for lunch, with an overnight in Jefferson City, MO, at the Capital Plaza Hotel, 415 West McCarty Street, Jefferson City, MO, 573-635-1234 or 800-338-8088 (group room rate $69.00 plus tax). The total mileage for Sunday is 128 miles. On Monday, June 27, we have scheduled a tour of the Missouri State Capital at 10:30 a.m. before driving to Lake of the Ozarks and lunch at the City Grill (45 miles). Our afternoon drive (some 134 miles) will take us to the Bass Pro Shops Outdoor World in Springfield before arriving in Branson, MO, in time for dinner. Our hotel for June 27 and 28 is the Radisson Hotel Branson, 120 South Wildwood Drive, Branson, MO, 417-335-5767 (group room rate $$72.00 plus tax). Total mileage for

TAKING NOTE

Thoughts, ideas and letters from the President, Tom Hamilton

Monday is 164 miles. Please note that we have blocked rooms at both hotels until June 12. Branson has about 50 shows playing concurrently at this time of the year. I have been told that it can be difficult to get bookings for some of the shows and recommend that you go online, reservebranson.com, to select and book the show(s) that you would like to see so that you will not be disappointed.

You will need to make your own reservations at the hotels for the After the Ball Tour. We have reserved 20 rooms at each hotel (they will hold these rooms available until the end of May). If you are interested in this tour, I have brochures available with the theater schedules for the 50-plus theaters in Branson, as well as other venues of interest. The Radisson is located in the middle of the theater district, making it easy to enjoy any show that is of interest.

Harold has put together a special tour, through his eyes, of a very special area of the country. You will enjoy the experience. I hope that you will be able to join us.

Remember, it's a 190SL kind of day, so enjoy it.
See you in St Louis.

Tom Hamilton

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A 190SL IN THE FAMILY

BY BILL LAMB

Installment # 3 – See Part 1 of story in the Mar/Apr 2004 Newsletter, Part 2 in the July/Aug 2004 Newsletter.

The restoration of 15558 drops in priority as winter approaches. But the project is still very much in mind, especially the problem I created by fitting the right quarter panel with the trunk lid open. I focus on the rear of the car and force myself to cut the welds that secure the panel around the taillight bucket and tail panel. I try to push the quarter panel over so that it clears the trunk lid, but the compound curves forbid such motion. I cut the seam at the rear cowl with little effect. This mistake has become a most depressing problem since the only way to move the panel will be to cut the welds everywhere and start over. I blot out these thoughts while I consider what else can be done in the few good days left.

Another concern is keeping the engine limber. With the engine sucking gas from a can stuffed in the right side front floor and no exhaust system, I drive the car around the yard once in a while. It idles nicely at 500 rpm and roars on command, but all the low-speed operations are fouling the plugs. William, my 15-year-old grandson, is learning to drive an automatic, but he needs some stick and clutch time. If he tears out the rear end, now is the time to find out. After some lurches that test the strength of the drive train and trailing arms, he can shift reasonably well. By next spring, when the major body work starts, I will pickle the engine. The car will be quite dead.

My original plan was to save the left quarter panel and install three Tim Kidder patches. Applying these will not be easy, and in addition, the rotted wheel house would not join the new eyebrow. I had also planned on reusing the tail panel, but it, too, was in bad shape. So I pack up the three patches, return them for credit, and order a left quarter panel, another wheel house patch, and a tail panel. It's December, the snow and cold have arrived in earnest, and the garage is no longer a friendly place. But I can at least slip the left quarter panel on the car, secure it with vice grips, and dream about how the car will look when finished. Something is wrong! No matter what I do, either the flange will not line up with the door pillar, or the sealing channel will not line up with the trunk lid. It misses by about $^3/_4$ inch. Because this is a new Mercedes part, it should fit; I wonder if the framework has distorted the door pillars. Measurements on left and right sides agree within 1/8 inch. So the mystery deepens. I take careful measurements of the right side panel, which fits perfectly, and note that some critical

dimensions are in error by $^3/_4$ of an inch on the left panel. The channel must move by that much before it will mate with the cowl.

There is a well-known Mercedes restoration shop close by. I had been reluctant to go there and admit I'm attempting a backyard restoration when I could simply turn the entire project over to them and get a show-class specimen in return. I had already met Jeff, the restoration manager, on another issue, so I mentioned the project and the problems with the panel. He agrees to visit, and together we position the panel this way and that. Nothing works.

Armed now with a professional witness, I call Tim, asking for a replacement; I will simply return the bad panel in the same container. But Tim has just received a similar complaint from another customer. Now there are two bad panels. January comes with bitter cold. Time out on the whole project until the panel problem sorts itself out. DCAG classic center will of course acknowledge the problem and deliver replacements in time for spring. I am even willing to drive to the classic center in Montvale to pick up the new panel.

Tim discovers that the entire current run of left quarter panels has this defect, and that Mercedes has no intention of correcting it. There are simply no good panels available. DCAG no longer makes the panels; they are made in Poland from the old dies. The problem must have occurred when they mispositioned the panel during the stamping. It can be made to fit only by slicing the panel, moving over the sealing channel and adding a strip

A 190SL IN THE FAMILY

by Bill Lamb

of sheet metal. Once again I ignore the rear of the car; the problems with both quarter panels are too overwhelming. I shut the garage door and wait for spring.

New England winters are harsh and long. The last one obliged by giving us daily highs of seven degrees in January. The brook froze in its banks, overflowed, and developed an ice pack we called Glacier National Park that lasted until April. I foolishly tried to start the car one day in March, aided with a shot of starting fluid in the Weber air filters. After a few backfires, I had an interesting blaze in the front filter that a CO_2 extinguisher suffocated. (I believe in rudimentary safety precautions, but if you don't have an extinguisher handy, continue cranking the engine with wide open throttle, thus sucking the flames into the engine where they belong.)

Summertime

It's finally time to dress the car. The framework is strong, but since it is invisible, attention to detail is not so critical. By contrast, the skins will require much fitting and adjusting. I would like even gaps around the hood, doors and tail panel, but I must accept compromises that result from lack of experience, prior damage that isn't entirely corrected, and general impatience. Perhaps when the project is done, I will regret the haste.

I concentrate on the nose and fenders; the challenge of the quarter panels and the tail will wait until I have more experience. In its former decrepit state, 15558 was missing the bug screen and all reinforcing around the nose. Additionally, at some distant time, it suffered a minor prang that had distorted all the metalwork at the front of the inner fenders so that the new reinforcements were quite impossible to fit without much tinkering that challenges my limited hammer-and-dolly experience. After endless uninspiring scraping, cleaning, and sanding, I remove the dirt and dried undercoating from the inner fenders, which exposes a number of holes and thin spots, all of which get patches. There's just no shortcut for removing undercoating. Torching it until it smokes

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by Bill Lamb

and smells and then scraping works best. Applying Eastwood's "Under-be-gone," an "environmentally friendly" solvent, doesn't help much. Final sanding makes a reasonably smooth surface.

Now the serious work begins: There's a lot of repair work on the inner fenders and the lower radiator support panels. The tubular cross member gets new ends made from exhaust pipe sections. Lots of rust was blown out of the tube, but the tube and subframe mount are still solid. Then I install the hood and let the front be the guide for the nose panel. I juggle the bug screen, reinforcing piece and nose until the fit looks wonderful. Because of damage at the front of the inner fenders, there's not much to anchor the parts. Satisfied, I look at the nice even gap. But now the hood won't open! After much fussing, I settle on a somewhat compromised fit that leaves a slightly uneven gap at the hood, but it opens without hitting anything. (Deduct points for the gap.)

The front fenders are next. I attach them to their rear panels and fit them around the doors. The gap is acceptable, but wider than I would like. (Deduct more points.) I crimp the fender around the rear panel. I trim the front of the fenders so there is a $^1/_4$-inch flange at the nose panel. I weld the fenders to the nose and seal the flange from underneath. Water and rust are not welcome. The MIG welder does a reasonable job without burn-through or warping. Grinding leaves a smooth joint that shouldn't need excessive filler. I prop the grill in position and indulge in more daydreams.

From the Rear

The quarter panel issues are next. I must push over the right panel to clear the lid. I must slice the left panel and install a splice. If the right panel won't move, then it must be replaced. Eastwood sold me a hydraulic body jack that will provide the pushing. I fashion a wooden block shaped to the fender curvature, and with one end of the jack in the left tire well and the other on the block, I push the panel into position, accompanied by much creaking.

Then the new tail panel: It has to fit exactly around the lid. Everything is so wobbly that I must make temporary braces to hold things in position. Tim Kidder supplied some pictures of the splice I must make in the left panel. The plasma cutter separates the channel from the rest of the quarter panel. The fit was so bad that the channel curvature doesn't match the lid unless I bend the channel slightly in several places. When the splice and reshaped channel is positioned, they line up perfectly with the lid. I nail the parts with tack welds, and check one last time.

Plumbum

After watching Eastwood's half-hour video on working with lead, I declare myself a lead-head and go to work, armed with lead bars, tinning flux, tallow, wooden paddles, and files. Working with this time-honored system demands my patience. One degree too hot and all the lead melts at once and runs out. Too cold and it refuses to stick; pieces of the bar simply break off and fall to the floor. I will never completely master the art of applying plumbum to vertical or upside down surfaces. But on-the-job training pays off, and the results are satisfying, if not perfect. Those sharp files shave the lead into smooth shiny contours. Bondo will hide the low spots. I fill all the seams around the cowls, the front fenders, and the long splice on the left quarter panel.

Taillights

The defects in the left quarter panel include a one-inch mismatch at the cutout for the taillight bucket compared with the cutout in the rear panel. Pushing the other quarter panel has badly distorted the shape around the other taillight bucket. My coachwork skills are no match for these problems, but I

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by Bill Lamb

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have had no success acquiring an off-hours body shop consultant. I am compelled to proceed without help. The body jack that pushed over the quarter panel will now reshape the metal around the buckets. I mount the pot-metal lamp holders with their gaskets and work the panels so there is a smooth contour and good seal. (I wonder if I should hold myself out as a body man after all.) Lead and body filler smooth the remaining discrepancies. The mismatch on the left side required extra metal, plus epoxy putty and filler to build up the low areas. Unless I could stand the car on its end, I couldn't accomplish this with lead. In time, if cracks appear, I will regret using plastics.

Skins on

It is now late August. The skins are on, the welders and grinders are quiet, and it's time to move to the next phase: preparing the car for painting. I had decided to do the underbody and floor painting and leave the outside to the professionals. By November, I want the car at the paint shop. There's a list of remaining items: filling in spots around the rocker panels, drilling holes for the chrome, and removing the dash. I have dreaded the dash project; I know how hard it will be to remove all the controls and steering. Coaxing rusted screws that haven't moved for 50 years will be a challenge. Brendan, my 12-year-old grandson who has long nimble fingers and a flexible back, can reach places that are off limits to me. I engaged my wife to shoot PB blaster at all the screws we could see, and Brendan attacked the screws and controls the next day. Wiping PB blaster from his face, he reduced all the controls and switches to a jumble of parts and wires and removed the remaining screws. The dash is out!

Tilting

For some time, I had considered buying the Liqui-Tech tilter that will tip a car almost 90 degrees using an ingenious set of rockers that bolt to the low-side wheel lugs and a jack screw that attaches to the high-side front wheel. I justified the tilter since it would let me complete seam welding on the floors from the underside and allow a thorough cleanup, sealing, and painting. I could recover most of the cost by selling it when I was done. The decision was sealed when I discovered the warehouse was only an hour's drive away.

The equipment is simple to set up. I carefully turn the jack screw with a 3/8" power drill while watching the front wheel. The jack screw raises the front wheel, compressing the spring more than I have ever seen before the car starts to rise. I worry about what's happening to the frame and body. But checking the rear trunk lid shows no problems, so I continue raising the car. For the first time, the underside is accessible and ready for work. I finish welding all the floors, seal up any left-over openings, and paint with epoxy primer and then DB169 brown paint. It's as beautiful as the underside of a car can be.

I lower the car onto its jack stands again. But I can't open the passenger side door! I get it open, and now it won't latch! Tilting has somehow angled the rear door pillar and body so that there is wider tapered gap between the door and the rear door pillar. A sleepless night follows.

by Bill Lamb

I check all the welds; nothing is broken. I think about the stresses that tilting imposes on the frame and body: All the tilting force is applied to the front wheel. Raising the car creates a bending moment that must be transmitted through the frame rail, through the short right angle cross piece, and ultimately to the rear frame, which must raise the rear axle. The frame rail is solid enough, but there is a twisting force through the cross piece where it connects to the rear frame. I concluded that this was a weak spot. Conclusion confirmed when I discover a missing weld. I decide to apply reverse stress to push the rear frame into position, thereby closing the gap at the door. So I move the jack screw to the rear wheel and apply force enough to move the rear frame, but not enough to tilt. The gap closes, and the door latches again. With the force applied, I add the missing weld. I gently release the force, measuring the distance between the door pillars. Nothing moves, and the door operates correctly. Whew! Clearly, my quality control is lacking.

I can only recommend a tilter on a car that is perfectly sound. If I were to do this again, I would supply some additional force through a column and jack at the rear of the car. I would attach bracing between the door pillars as well. Tilting a sedan could not cause a problem of this sort since the forces would be transmitted through the roof.

Paint Shops

Meanwhile, I have been searching for a decent paint shop willing to take on something other than a "crash-and-repair" insurance job. One such place is recommended, and I meet Tony who agrees to come to the garage. He is surprised at the extent of the project and asks me to call when the car is nearly ready. But his shop is always too busy, and his personal problems lead to unanswered messages and endless postponements. At present, he can't commit to a schedule and advises that when the ice and snow arrive, he will be too busy repairing fender benders to get involved. I am investigating other shops.

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tel: 952.934.6306
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For Sale: 1956 190SL black/red interior. I am a perfectionist, and this car, which I have owned 10+ years, is in excellent body, mechanical, and driving condition. $48,000. If you want a 190SL, this is the one!

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Vail, CO
tel: 970.476.0379 • e-mail: lenbusse@comcast.net — 03/01/05

For Sale: 190SL owner's manual, $34.95. Glenn's repair manual, $19.95. Seven different SL history books, $17-$35. Factory Shop Service Repair Manuals also for sale.

Alex Voss
4850 37th Ave. So. • Seattle, WA 98118
tel: 206.721.3077 — 03/01/05

For Sale: I would like to sell some 190 parts that I have. 1) Left-front A arm with brake shoes and spindle but no brake drum, spring, or shock, $100. 2) Right-front A arm with brake shoes and spindle but no drum, spring, or shock, $100. 3) Pedal assembly and master cylinder with reservoir as burned out of a 190SL, $20.00. 4) Two pieces of a drive shaft free to anyone who picks them up and pays shipping and handling. Thanks.

Alfred Algeria III
tel: 201.487.5622, Ext. 2209 — 11/01/04

For Sale: 1960 190SL, VIN 121.040.10.016438. Rare discovery hidden away for 30 years, bought at 63,900 miles from second owner in May 2001. Refurbished and totally original and complete. Everything works, runs great. $30K.

Ted Miller
5902 Woodpark • Midland, MI 48640
tel: 989-631-4082 • e-mail: tellmetllc@yahoo.com — 11/01/04

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Threads from the Web

compiled by Walt Puryear

Seats

Sheffield Nolan
Please help with my seat questions if you can. I have the late style, where the back, rather than the whole seat, folds up. How many of the brass holes were in a '57 seat back, #52-36. I think it was three, but I have seen others with more, and what was the color of the paint or finish on #52-5 (the bottom of the seat)?

Ed Bertrand
Up to chassis number 6501937 (coupes only, or optional on roadsters), there were NO holes, and both sides were the same part number (40 121 910 00 390). Starting with chassis number 6501938 through 8501675, three holes were added, but again, both sides were the same part number (40 121 910 03 39). Then from chassis number 8501676 to the end of production, the seat backs were replaced with two separate part numbers for each side (121 910 01 39 - left & 121 910 02 39 - right), but still had the three holes.
NOTE: All the part numbers listed above are for the leather seats. Number 1 only came in leather, so no part numbers for the MBTex are needed. Numbers 2 and 3 came in either leather or MBTex, but I didn't give the MBTex part numbers out. If you need them, let me know.

Ron Rapp
The steel metal bottom was a dark gray on my '57. It had the last three digits of the body number written in grease pencil. I can't recall a specific paint code number.

Jim Morris
I just redid my interior and offer a couple of suggestions about your seats, knowing this might not sit well with purists. While the covers were off, I tightly stuffed the largest scraps of upholstery foam I reasonably could into and between the springs. I continued until I couldn't stuff any more and had a tight firm mass in which the springs were embedded. I then rewrapped the springs, reinstalled the large shaped pad, etc., and installed the new leather covers. This did three things, I think all of them good: 1) It made the soft, wobbly seats much firmer and more comfortable; 2) it reduced the travel the leather has to make on compression and rebound (so it takes less abuse and should last longer), and 3) it entirely eliminated the nagging "spring noise" these seats always seem to have. You should be able to get these scraps at an upholstery shop—just make sure it's high-quality stuff. Finally, the three (proper) grommets for your seat back are still available from the factory, but you should be sitting down when you find out how much they cost!

Ed Bertrand
I don't think anyone will "pooh pooh" your seat improvements! ESPECIALLY when it involves something that's hidden anyway like this is! It sounds to me like this will really help the support in these seats AND make the leather last a lot longer. Nothing wrong with that! As a matter of fact, this is just the kind of improvement that we could put in the Newsletter.

Bill Ainsworth
I posted some comments/questions about general seat "springiness" a month or two ago and had not considered or heard of adding foam between the springs—seems like a good solution. Does it change the outer contour of the seat? Doesn't seem like it would. Thanks for the tip!

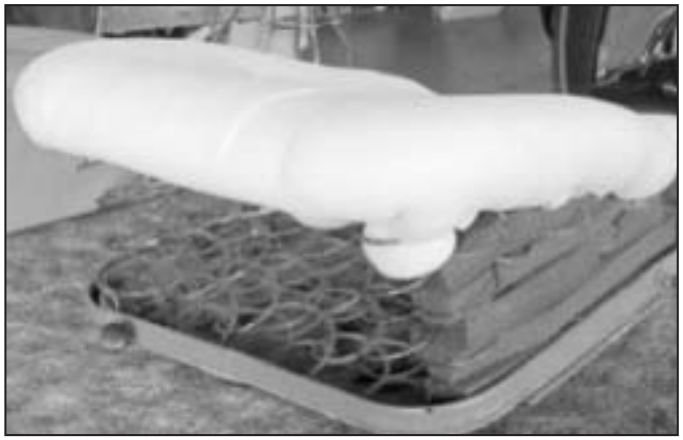
I'll be taking my car out of commission and tearing into my seats once I see some sign of winter out here. We're probably looking at another 85° Christmas –time to break out the SPF 30 (again)!

Jim Morris
Somehow I missed your "springiness" post or I would have replied to that directly. No, the procedure I used doesn't in any way affect the seat contours (although if one tried hard enough, one could wedge so much stuffing in, that one would see bulges through the leather in the sides, at least when the seats were compressed—mine are fine; you'd never know I did what I did). I forgot to note that, of course, the compressing strings must be passed through all of this foam from the seat covers through the bottom spring, wrapping so that the proper creases can be pulled into the leather seating surface for the factory look. Otherwise you will have a seat bottom that looks like a balloon and feels as if you sitting on one! Good luck.

Bill Ainsworth
An update on my seat project. Our weather did change, so I decided it was time to attack my seats. I purchased a large sheet of foam from a local upholstery shop with the intention of "blocking the springs" (upholstery term), only to find out on

seat removal that the felt strips or battens that form the ridges in the bottom of the seat had worked themselves backwards almost completely out of the seat (driver's side)? I know I could loose a couple of pounds, but now it's getting personal. At this point I decided to drag the seats down to the shop for some additional input and concluded it best to let the experts take over. They said no big deal, couple of hours of work, and all would be good. Said the felt strip thing is not uncommon (one is starting to back out of the passenger side, which gets little use…).

Attached are a few photos (below) I took of the seat blocking



process. Strips of 1"x2" upholstery foam are inserted between the springs around the perimeter of the seat. Apparently solid layers of foam would make the seat too firm, per the upholstery guy. Seat feels great. Now I can actually stay seated while "high-speed cornering"

P.S. Yes, I know I'm missing the original horse hair pads, but couldn't locate any at the time of re-upholstery—checked every catalog I could get my hands on.

Jim Morris

Your seat looks great! The only difference between the approach I described and the one taken by your upholstery shop person was that I stuffed the center sections as well as the periphery so that there would be a uniform firmness and buffering for the springs. But as one can see from your photos, the modification of adding foam doesn't change the appearance or contours of the seat, and no doubt you are pleased with the feel of this result. I hope others do this, too, because it seems a shame to spend so much money on having seats redone and ending up with the squishy, noisy characteristics they had originally.

Bill Ainsworth

Now that I've reinstalled the seats and have driven on them a bit, they really feel like a lot like our 320 wagon. I thought the perimeter blocking might leave the center soft—not the case. The seats have a very uniform firmness. Probably sit .5" to 1" higher. Amazing how such a little thing completely changes the feel of the car while driving.

Badge

Jim Villers

I currently have the 190SL 50th Anniversary Grill Badge available for sale in the Club Store. The badge was designed by Bill Ainsworth and Don Drabik for the Sonoma Convention and celebrates the 50th anniversary of the introduction of the 190SL at the New York Auto Show in 1954. The price is $30 and includes domestic shipping.

Frank Telang

What a beautiful badge! Where would it attach to the car? On the grill screen?

Joe Amaro

The grille screen is the most obvious choice, but hanging off the bumper is also a possibility. Some may want to cut the threaded studs on the back of the badge and mount it elsewhere. I'm sure we'll have lots of suggestions at the convention.

As you may be able to see, the badge attaches snugly to the underside "lip" of the chrome wing with an improvised bracket. No holes are needed. Rubber on the studs and backside of the badge protect the wing from any scratches. Thanks go to Ray Wischhover, who came up with the idea. Ray will be at the convention if anyone else is interested in this type of mounting.

Gas Caps

Phil Langlois

Who can tell me the differences between a vented and un-vented gas cap and provide a picture of the underside of a vented cap? Thanks.

Ed Bertrand

"Non-Vented" caps have the word *Ohne Luftrung* inscribed on the underside of the cap. Original "Vented" caps don't have *Luftrung,* but the later "over the counter" replacements do. Your '59 was built a few months after they made the locking gas cap standard, so you should have this cap (see below).

ONLINE MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

The Business Office would like to ask all members who are comfortable with online purchases to please use our Online Store for membership renewal. The Club now accepts American Express® in addition to MasterCard® and Visa® credit cards.

The Club's Online Store has become a very successful outlet for the sale of club products. With our experience in processing about 100 sales transactions over the past three months, the internal benefits of online processing have become very apparent. It saves the Business Office, the Club Store, and the Treasurer a lot of manual work. Our secure credit card gateway processes transactions, deposits funds directly into the Club's bank account, and provides detailed transaction records. For each transaction, an e-mail order and payment certification are automatically sent to both the member and the Club Store. The only manual tasks are shipping the product and updating the member database.

NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to the club!

Adele Smith, Framingham, MA
Owns a 1962 190SL, red with tan interior

Craig Lemster, Mckinleyville, CA
Owns a 1959 190SL, strawberry with tan interior

Benton de la Houssaye, Crowley, LA
Owns a 1959 190SL, red with tan interior

Michael J. Grauel, Portsmouth, NH
Owns a 1956 190SL, silver with blue interior

Steve Mraovic, Phoenix, AZ

Alvylyn Jones, Burke, VA

Robert Wood, Summit, NJ
Owns a 1957 190SL, cream with blue interior

James Lang, Fort Wayne, IN
Looking to buy a 190SL!

Rick Siefert, Wildwood, MO
Considering a purchase!

Ben Adadevoh, Amherst, MA
Owns a 1961 190SL being restored

Ivan Widdows, Sheffield, UK
Owns a 1958 190SL being restored

Robert Rankel, Katonah, NY

Kendall Randolph, St. Joseph, MO
Owns a 1961 190SL, ivory with black interior

Kevin Eberle, Charleston, SC
Owns a 1961 190SL, red with tan interior

George Gallucci, Aptos, CA
Owns a 1959 190SL under restoration

Thomas Muritshaw, Westfield, NJ
Owns a 1956 190SL

John McAlpine, Aptos, CA
Owns a 1955 190SL

Joel Peterson, La Canada Flintridge, CA
Owns a 1959 190SL, red with tan interior

Steve Rose, West Orange, NJ
Owns a 1963 190SL, black with red interior

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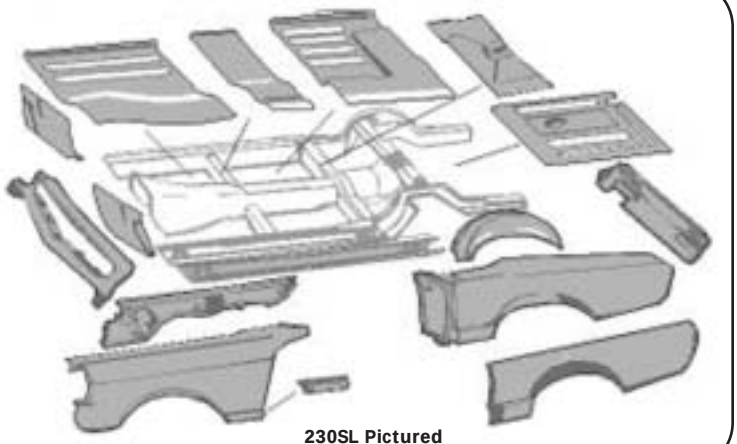

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Check the Website for current events. www.190slgroup.com

- 2005 International 190SL Convention will be held in St. Louis, MO, June 22-26, 2005 – Co-hosted by Tom and Marilyn Hamilton and the Kemp family.
- 2006 International 190SL Convention will be held in Georgia Hill Country – Hosted by Walt and Valerie Puryear
- 2007 International 190SL Convention will be held in Lexington, Kentucky – Hosted by Harry and Susan Spitzmiller
- 2008 International 190SL Convention will be held in Southern California – Hosted by Bill and Linda Ainsworth

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190SL REGISTRY

Ed Bertrand is accepting your chassis, body, engine, etc., numbers, for the Group's 190SL Registry. Please forward these, along with a copy of your "Build Sheet" or "Data Card" and a few photos of the car to him at bertfam@pcmagic.net or his home address, Ed Bertrand, 25547 Buckly Drive, Murrieta, CA 92563.

If you have any questions, you can reach him at 951.677.1116 (home) or 800.423.0481, Ext. 131 (work) California time.

To obtain a free copy of your Build Sheet or Data Card, write, call, or fax:

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190SL. 13,400 miles, red/tan. Condition 1. Restored by Bob Platz in 1991 for 190SL Group club president. Won Best of Show at 190SL Group National Convention. Looks, runs, and drives perfectly. I bought the car in 2001 with 11,700 miles and put 1,700 miles on the car to sort it out and be sure that everything works properly. Car is ready to show or drive.

1986 560SL. 86,400 miles, silver/gray. Condition 2+. Florida car; both tops; front end, engine, brakes and transmission rebuilt and have a total of 100 miles on them. This car is ready for the next 100,000 miles.

AD

For more information, contact Tom Hamilton.
tel: 585.385.9078
e-mail: arm1@rochester.rr.com

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On the left is the ATE Master Cylinder for cars after 8501755 on. This was when the change from metal cans for the brake fluid reservoir changed to plastic. In the center is the same Master Cylinder made by PKW. On the right is PKW early style Master Cylinder for car up to 8501754 with brake boosters installed.

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THE MEMBERS MAIL BAG

Open letters, faxes, e-mails & more from 190SL Group members. Editor's e-mail is: racing190sl@aol.com.

1963 Production Data **Q**

Hello Bruce,

My wife recently got me a copy of the 190SL book that you and your club produced. It's a great production. I have a question on the "final" 190SL production date. The table on page 10 says that production ended in 1963, with 104 produced that year. A factory photo (p. 54 in the book) and the data table in the back (p. 180) both say that the last 190SL was in December 1962. I have seen conflicting data on this before, so I wondered if you could help clarify it for me.

Thank you,
Jeff
1957 190 sedan (Webasto roof/Euro spec.)

Hi, Jeff! **A**

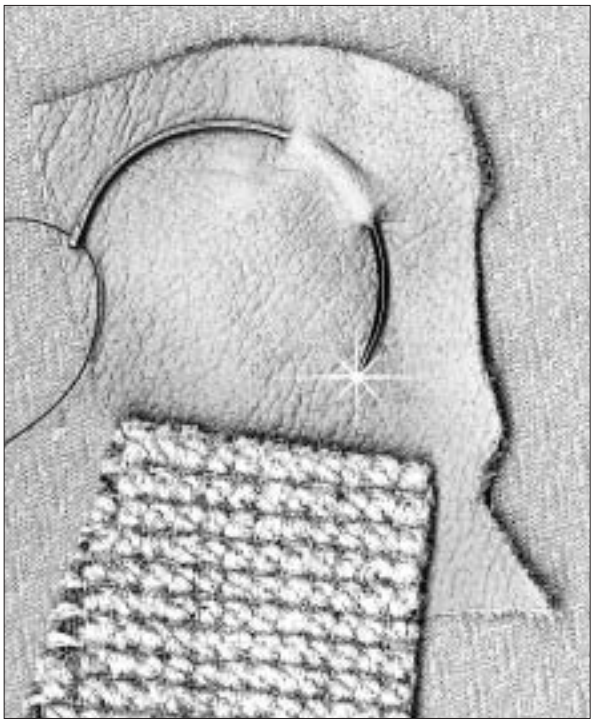
Thanks for the comments on the book. That's a great question. I asked the same question of the archives and was told that the end of assembly is not the same as the end of production. After the 190SL is assembled, it must undergo testing, final inspection, detailing, and preparation for shipping to its port of destination, either in country or export. So the last 104 190SLs, 25778 through 25881, were assembled in late '62 and released by the factory in early '63.

Bruce

The last 190SL rolled off the assembly line on Friday, February 8,1963. (See the picture, p. 54, in the Club book showing the engineers posing with the last 190SL and the last 300 SL. The date on the bottom of the signs read 8.2.1963.) You have to look very closely—better seen on the 300SL sign. However, you should note that NO cars were started after December 31,1962. In other words, all the cars manufactured in 1963 were 1962 "leftovers," partially completed cars needing to be finished. These 104 cars, although started in 1962, are still officially recorded as 1963 models since they were completed in that year.

Ed Bertrand

Ron's Will Leave You In Stitches



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Speedo needle is bouncing **Q**

My speedo needle is bouncing. I have replaced the cable and also had the gauge restored recently. Any ideas? Thanks

Herb

Hi, Herb. **Q**

The rear trans nut holds the assembly in place with a required 110 ft-lbs, including the speedo gear assembly. It is not uncommon for this nut to loosen, causing your problem. This is usually caused by the tabs on the nut not bent (secured) correctly. One tab should be up and one down so it locks.

The picture is an example of an incorrect use of the locking plate. This tranny was done by a well-known restoration shop—I won't mention any names—and is not unusual in what I find while working on these cars. The main shaft locking plate as shown here only locks the nut to the plate, nothing else. If you look closely at the plate, you will see an indent in the trans casting. You also need to bend the plate into that area, creating a one-down and one-up tab to secure the nut. This is true of all the locking tabs on a 190SL; you may want to check the others used on the front and rear axles. If a locking plate has two tabs, one needs to be up and one needs to be down, Bending them both around the nut secures nothing.

Barrett-Jackson Auto Auction
Barrett-Jackson Sales Exceed $61M! **C**

The Barrett-Jackson Auto Auction gets bigger every year and has become as much an event as an auction.

It is certainly very much a forum for Muscle Cars and Resto-Rods. High prices were paid in almost every case compared

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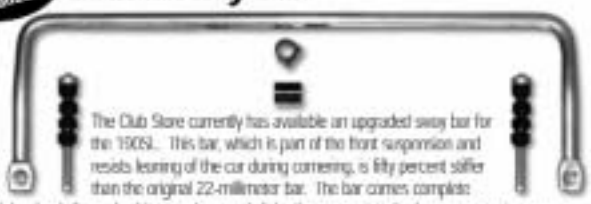
Club Store

Now Available! **25mm Sway Bar**



The Club Store currently has available an upgraded sway bar for the 190SL. This bar, which is part of the front suspension and resists leaning of the car during cornering, is fifty percent stiffer than the original 22-millimeter bar. The bar comes complete with hard poly frame bushings and new poly links that connect to the lower suspension arms. Installing the bar is a straightforward two hour do-it-yourself job. ***The bar is available only to US members for $250, which includes UPS ground shipping.***

190SL Group Technical Manual

A must-have reference which includes maintenance, repair, restoration, and factory information compiled from 1983-1991 Newsletters, other publications, and direct member contributions. This manual complements other shop manuals.

The Tech Manual is available only to Club Members at a cost of $75 *($110 for non-Club members, which includes one year of Club Membership).*

DVD's

Three DVD's were produced by the club: 1) Engine Rebuild, 2) Installing Leather Dashboard Cover, and 3) Solex Carburetor Rebuild. These DVD's provide an excellent visual walk-through of these major tasks, with many subtle tips from a veteran Mercedes mechanic. ***DVD's are available for $75 per set.***

Mercedes-Benz 190SL Print

The Club has a limited number of Don Drabik's signed and numbered 18" x 24" color lithograph of the Mercedes-Benz 190SL. Prints have small wrinkles or crush damage in the top border; the print and signature areas are perfect. ***Prints are available for $125.***

190SL Group Newsletters 1983-2001 CD

This auto-loading CD contains 18 years of Club Newsletters, with an alphabetical index of all technical entries. The CD also contains many owner stories, glimpses of the Club in earlier times, and technical information on every aspect of the 190SL. ***The CD is available only to Club Members at a cost of $75*** *($110 for non-Club members, which includes one year of Club Membership).*

The Club Book

"Doing it once and doing it right the first time" is one of my favored expressions as it relates to the 190SL. This 190SL book is first of all a "how-to" book, written to substantiate this restoration approach. It focuses on the how's and not the why's. It provides solutions rather than describing the problems. The many technical procedures are explained by some of the best professional 190SL restorers.

Beyond the restoration procedures, this book documents the many details that are necessary to understand what constitutes an authentic 190SL. All of the production changes that were incorporated into the car during its production are described and illustrated with pictures and drawings.

This book is finally about owning and enjoying 190SL. It contains tips and advice on maintaining and repairing the 190SL, modifying the car for vintage racing or just enjoying what the 190SL does best, touring the open spaces.

I hope that you will agree that this Mercedes-Benz 190SL book is truly "Best of Show."

Bruce I. Adams

Hardbound, 184 pages (approx. 50 color) ***The book is available to Members for $65, non-Club Members for $75.***

Grill Badge

This grill badge was designed by club member Don Drabik for the 190SL Group to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the introduction of the Mercedes-Benz 190SL at the New York Auto Show in 1954. Polished metal with a 3-color fired enamel coating. ***The badge is available for $30.***

Club Logo Items

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Blue Name Tag with magnet clasp $15

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21ST ANNUAL 190SL NATIONAL CONVENTION
St. Louis, Missouri! June 22-26, 2005

to price indexes. Witness the $264M paid for a Gull Wing "recreation" that the seller expected $90-125M for. A 1954 Oldsmobile Concept car brought $3.2M, when the seller had told me he hoped it would bring $700M!

The Barrett-Jackson was not strong for Mercedes-Benz automobiles. There were three 300SL Roadsters, a couple of 280 SLs, and one 190SL which brought $37M. I did not look at the 190SL closely, but it appeared to be a decent #3 car. Several 107 bodies of various descriptions were sold.

A better pure auction to me was the R-M Auction held one day during the BJA, at the Arizona Biltmore. A Dusenberg sold there for $2.7M, and many other relative rare cars were run through, including Ferraris and 300SLs.

I would expect to see the Scottsdale BJA to move to another site in the near future due to its ever-increasing size and the nature of the grounds. The field area does not drain well, and the last two years they have had rain the first day. This year it rained hard two days and left the field a soggy, muddy mess.

A great place for sellers to be rewarded and we hope, buyers. A lot of automobile buffs were left speechless at the results.

John Vipond

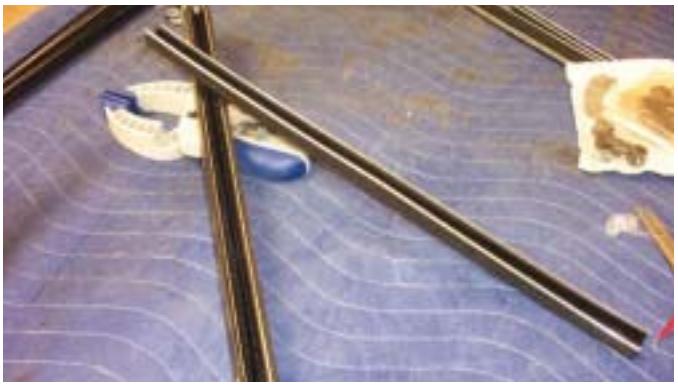
Restoration Tips C

These pictures show three restoration suggestions for those of you that have your 190SL apart. If you are doing bodywork, consider using this seam sealer. Wurth calls it Adhesivflex Urethane # 890 1003.

I like to use two glues in the shop, one for rubber gaskets, and that again is a Wurth product called Wurth Rubber Glue, # 0890-100015. A good one to use with your leather (i.e., installing leather on the dash) is DAP Weldwood contact cement. I got that tip from Ron's Interiors, Peachtree City, GA.

And what I consider the tip of the year comes from Ron Rapp, SL AutoHaus. In the Club book, Ron writes about the "Care & Feeding of Your 190SL Doors," page 86. In that article, Ron suggests replacing those old jaw guides with new bristle channel from later MB models. The part number for this channel is 000 985 29 30, two needed per window. SL Autohaus carries this part. I put it in all the 190SLs I work on, and it works wonderfully.

Bruce Adams



MEET ME IN ST. LOUIS! JUNE 22-26, 2005

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Membership: US, 620; Vendors, 13; Internationals, 63

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